

REMARKS

This is in full and timely response the Office Action dated May 11, 2011.

Claims 50-69 are currently pending in this application, with claims 50, 68 and 69 being independent. *No new matter has been added.*

Election/restrictions

The Restriction Requirement found within the Office Action asserts an existence of the following patentably distinct inventions:

Species 1:	Figure 2
Species 2	Figures 3 and 4
Species 3	Figure 5
Species 4	Figure 6
Species 5	Figure 7
Species 6	Figure 8
Species 7	Figure 9
Species 8	Figures 10 and 11
Species 9	Figures 12 and 16
Species 10	Figures 13 and 17
Species 11	Figures 14 and 15

The Applicant, through its representatives and attorneys, hereby provisionally elects, *WITH traverse*, the invention of the alleged *Species 1, Figure 2*, with claims 50-60, 62, and 64-69 being believed to be readable thereon.

Traversal

For the reasons provided hereinbelow, the Restriction Requirement made within the Office Action of May 11, 2011 is respectfully **traversed**.

1. Claims previously acted upon.

The **claims originally presented and acted upon** by the Office on their merits determine the invention elected by an applicant in the application. M.P.E.P. §818.02(a).

As shown hereinbelow, it is readily apparent that features found within each of the alleged Species have been either elected or have been **previously examined on the merits**.

A. Species 1: Figure 2.

Figure 2 shows the first embodiment of the vibration isolation apparatus of the present invention.

This response to the most recent Restriction Requirement of May 11, 2011 includes the **election** of the alleged Species 1, **Figure 2**.

B. Species 2: Figures 3 and 4.

Figure 3 shows the second embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention.

Figure 4 shows the third embodiment of the vibration isolation apparatus of the present invention.

The non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes an examination on the merits of Figures 3 and 4.

C. Species 3: Figure 5.

Figure 5 shows the fourth embodiment of the vibration isolation apparatus of the present invention.

The non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes an examination on the merits of Figure 5.

D. Species 4: Figure 6.

Figure 6 shows the fifth embodiment of the vibration isolation apparatus of the present invention.

In Figure 6, pneumatic springs 9 with positive spring characteristics k_3 making up the load supporter are installed between the vibration-isolating table 3 and the floor 1.

The non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes an examination on the merits of prior claim 36, which provide that said load supporter includes pneumatic springs with positive spring characteristics.

Accordingly, it is believed that the non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes an examination on the merits of Figure 6.

E. Species 5: Figure 7.

Figure 7 shows the sixth embodiment of the vibration isolation apparatus of the present invention.

In Figure 7, the actuator (linear actuator) 8 serves as the *supporter with negative spring characteristics*.

The non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes an *examination on the merits* of prior claim 42, which provides that the vibration-isolating table supported on the intermediate plate by the *supporter with specified negative spring characteristics* comprising the actuator and the controller.

Accordingly, it is believed that the non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes an *examination on the merits* of *Figure 7*.

F. Species 6: Figure 8.

Figure 8 illustrates the seventh embodiment of the vibration isolation apparatus of the present invention.

In contrast, in the seventh embodiment shown in Figure 8, the *linear actuator 10* with negative spring characteristics is inserted between the intermediate plate 2 and the floor 1 in parallel with the spring elements k1 and the damping elements c1.

Prior claim 43 provides for the apparatus for vibration isolation as claimed in claim 42, wherein said intermediate plate is further supported on said base by a linear actuator.

However, the non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes the withdrawal of prior claim 43 from consideration on the merits.

G. Species 7: Figure 9.

Figure 9 shows the eighth embodiment of the vibration isolation apparatus of the present invention.

In Figure 9, pneumatic springs 9 with positive spring characteristics that form the load supporter 5 are installed between the vibration-isolating table 3 and the floor 1.

The non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes an examination on the merits of prior claim 36, which provide that said load supporter includes pneumatic springs with positive spring characteristics.

Accordingly, it is believed that the non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes an examination on the merits of Figure 9.

H. Species 8: Figures 10 and 11.

Figure 10 shows the ninth embodiment of the present invention.

The vibration isolation apparatus of this structure is basically the same as any of the first through the eighth embodiments described above except that at least one each of the base (foundation), intermediate plate (the first member) or vibration-isolating table (the second member) are paired into a module.

Accordingly, it is believed that the non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes an examination on the merits of Figure 10.

Figure 11 presents the tenth embodiment of the present invention.

The tenth embodiment is the same as the ninth embodiment except that the linear actuator 32 with positive rigidity is arranged in parallel with the supporter k1.

Accordingly, it is believed that the non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes an examination on the merits of Figure 11.

I. Species 9: Figures 12 and 16.

Figure 12 shows the eleventh embodiment of the present invention.

The eleventh embodiment is the same as the ninth embodiment except that the actuator 31 with negative rigidity replaces the magnetic levitation mechanism used in the ninth embodiment.

Accordingly, it is believed that the non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes an examination on the merits of Figure 12.

Figure 16 presents the fifteenth embodiment of the present invention.

The fifteenth embodiment is the same as the thirteenth embodiment except that the actuator 31 with negative rigidity replaces the magnetic levitation mechanism used in the thirteenth embodiment.

Accordingly, it is believed that the non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes an examination on the merits of Figure 16.

J. Species 10: Figures 13 and 17.

Figure 13 presents the twelfth embodiment of the present invention.

The twelfth embodiment uses modules each comprising at least one each of the base (foundation), intermediate plate (the first member) or vibration-isolating table (the second member).

Accordingly, it is believed that the non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes an examination on the merits of Figure 13.

Figure 17 presents the sixteenth embodiment of the present invention.

The sixteenth embodiment is the same as the thirteenth embodiment except that the actuator 31 with negative rigidity and the spring elements k2 with positive spring characteristics replace the magnetic levitation mechanism.

Further, the actuator 32 with positive rigidity is added in parallel with the supporter installed between the base and the intermediate plate in the thirteenth embodiment.

Accordingly, it is believed that the non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes an examination on the merits of Figure 17.

K. Species 11: Figures 14 and 15.

Figure 14 shows the thirteenth embodiment of the present invention.

The thirteenth embodiment uses both the nested vibration-isolating structure shown in the above-mentioned ninth embodiment and the non-nested structure shown in the second and other embodiments.

Accordingly, it is believed that the non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes an examination on the merits of Figure 14.

Figure 15 presents the fourteenth embodiment of the present invention.

The fourteenth embodiment is the same as the thirteenth embodiment except that the linear actuator 32 with positive rigidity is added in parallel with the supporter k1.

Accordingly, it is believed that the non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010 includes an examination on the merits of Figure 15.

L. Generally.

The above-mentioned ninth through twelfth embodiments use modules each comprising at least one each of the base (foundation), intermediate plate (the first member) or vibration-isolating table (the second member).

M. Summary.

The Restriction Requirement of May 11, 2011 seeks to make a Restriction Requirement among features found within the claims that have already been searched and examined.

In this regard, the Restriction Requirement of May 11, 2011 fails to show that the Restriction Requirement is based upon:

1. Claims having mutually exclusive characteristics, or
2. Claims that are not obvious variants of each other.

As a consequence, the Restriction Requirement of May 11, 2011 fails to show the addition of a different invention added after the non-final Office Action of September 14, 2010.

2. Rejoinder of claims 61 and 63

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) practice and procedures dictate that this linking claim must be examined with, and thus are considered part of, the invention elected.

Specifically, M.P.E.P. §809 provides that when all claims directed to the elected invention are allowable, should any linking claim be allowable, the restriction requirement between the linked inventions **must be withdrawn**.

Claims 61 and 63 are dependent upon elected claim 50.

Accordingly, **rejoinder** of the remaining alleged inventions upon the allowance of claim 50 is respectfully requested. M.P.E.P. §809.

Relief

Withdrawal of this Restriction Requirement and examination of all pending claims is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

This response is believed to be a complete response to the Office Action.

Applicants reserve the right to set forth further arguments supporting the patentability of their claims, including the separate patentability of the dependent claims not explicitly addressed herein, in future papers.

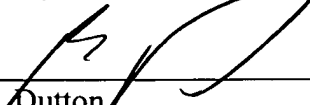
For the foregoing reasons, all the claims now pending in the present application are allowable, and the present application is in condition for allowance.

Accordingly, favorable reexamination and reconsideration of the application in light of the remarks is courteously solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone Brian K. Dutton, Reg. No. 47,255, at 202-955-8753.

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Respectfully submitted,

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